



INSTRUCT-O-GRAM

THE HANDS-ON TRAINING GUIDE
FOR THE FIRE INSTRUCTOR

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Strategy and Tactics (Part Three)

Tactical Action Planning and Decision Making

TIME REQUIRED

Three hours

MOTIVATION

Important information must be obtained for the planning of strategy and tactics for each occupancy before a fire occurs. The tactical planning for a given fire is influenced by many factors and each factor can vary considerably.

A pre-fire plan will give the officer the information needed, and sizeup will tell him or her how important each item is. The sum of pre-fire planning and sizeup gives the officer a firm basis on which to plan his or her tactics.

After performing a proper sizeup, the fire officer must next consider a tactical action plan. When formulating the tactical action plan, the following thirteen items must be considered. Each item demands a decision. If the item constitutes a problem, then action will be taken to meet the needs. Not all will be used at every fire, but each must be considered.

OBJECTIVE

The principle objective of this *Instruct-O-Gram* is to provide the necessary information for the fire officer to properly institute a tactical action plan to handle an emergency scene.

TACTICAL ACTION PLAN

The tactical action plan consists of the following thirteen items:

A. RESCUE

1. Number of persons in trouble
2. Type of persons in trouble (young, old, invalid, etc)
3. Are the people really in trouble
4. Why are they in trouble

B. SAFETY

1. Operating forces
 - a. Breathing apparatus
 - b. Electricity and other utilities

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- c. Toxic gases from the fire or hazardous materials
- d. Fire extent and location in the building
- e. Structural condition of the building
- 2. Other forces
 - a. Evacuation of civilians and spectators
 - b. Crowd control

C. COMMUNICATIONS (oral, written, radio, telephone, fax, etc.)

- 1. Receiving information
 - a. From firefighters
 - b. From fire officers
- 2. Dictating orders for firefighting

D. EXTENSION PROTECTION (possibly the first major decision made on the fireground)

- 1. Probability of having to cover exposures first
 - a. As the initial operations
 - b. If the first-in Command cannot hold the fire
- 2. Probability of fire extending to exposures
 - a. Interior exposures
 - b. Exterior exposures

E. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL HELP (called early enough to do some good)

- 1. Additional manpower
- 2. Additional equipment (engines, ladders, rescues, etc.)
- 3. Special equipment (foam, hose, deckguns, tankers, etc.)

F. VENTILATION

- 1. Type of ventilation needed (natural, power assisted, vertical, horizontal, combination)

- 2. Where ventilation is needed
- 3. Timing of the ventilation

G. FORCIBLE ENTRY

- 1. External (windows, doors, etc.)
- 2. Internal (doors, windows, walls, hidden voids, etc.)

H. USE OF INTERNAL FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

- 1. Standpipes
- 2. Sprinklers (types of systems)
- 3. Proper support of systems

I. EXTINGUISHMENT

- 1. Size of the structure
- 2. Extent of the fire
- 3. Water requirements
 - a. Water available
 - b. Distance to water supply
 - c. Type of water supply (water mains, static, shuttles, relays)
- 4. Direct or indirect application of water
- 5. Mode of attack

J. SALVAGE

- 1. Within the extinguishing operations
- 2. Additional methods

K. COOPERATION OF OTHER AGENCIES

- 1. Police
- 2. Medical
- 3. Public utilities
 - a. Electric company
 - b. Gas company
 - c. LPG distributor
- 4. Private or special agencies (trucking companies, railroads, other agencies, local, county, state, federal governments)

5. Private contractors
6. Mutual aid contracts
7. Other city or county departments

L. OVERHAUL

1. Amount of equipment needed
2. Relieving personnel
3. Public relations

M. NOTIFICATION

1. Welfare department
2. Health department
3. Red Cross/Salvation Army/etc.
4. Investigation
 - a. City police
 - b. Sheriff
 - c. State fire marshal
 - d. Prosecutor
 - e. Other interested agencies

MAJOR TACTICAL DECISIONS

The officer in charge must make several major decisions regarding the tactics to be used. The success or failure of the operations will depend on these decisions. The operations will be a failure if no decision is made. The responsibility for and follow-up on each decision must be the activity of the fire ground commander.

A. DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES (how much of what, will be used where)

1. Selection and placement of nozzles and hose lines
 - a. How much water and equipment are available
 - b. What is the objective
 - c. Degree of mobility needed

2. Placement of apparatus
 - a. Quantity of water available
 - b. Pumping capacity
 - c. Hose capacity
 - d. Where action is now
 - e. Where will the action be in the near future
3. Utilization of manpower
 - a. How many are available
 - b. What can they do
 - c. Are they working as units (companies)
4. Use of special equipment
 - a. Where is it located
 - b. How long will it take to arrive on location
5. Maintaining reserves (units in staging)
 - a. Apparatus
 - b. Manpower

B. SEQUENCE OF OPERATIONS

1. Limited in amount of manpower, equipment
2. Each need has to be placed in a priority order
 - a. Objective has to be kept in mind

C. COORDINATION, CONTROL AND SUPERVISION

1. Delegation
 - a. Responsibility
 - b. Authority
2. Positions and duties of officers (line and staff)
 - a. Pre-planned or pre-assignment of personnel
 - b. Use of people available

3. Command Post
 - a. Placement of Command Post
 - b. Communications point for all operations
4. Staging Area
 - a. An area for fireground reserves waiting assignment

D. COMMUNICATIONS (The giving and receiving of information)

1. Radio
 - a. Procedures
 - b. Utilization of standard terms
2. Outside

SUMMARY

At the scene of any emergency, decisions must be made to resolve the incident. The officer must

recognize important scene problems. We must remember that the incident will dictate what is happening and what is about to happen.

In order to overcome these problems, the officer must have and follow guidelines to effectively, efficiently and safely resolve the situation. Good tactical action planning and decision-making will help you overcome incident problems.

Good tactical action plans and decision-making must be based on a proper sizeup of the incident scene upon arrival.

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